

Native American Village Dogs (aka Village Dogs)

Group 6 - Utility

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(Info provided by breed founder - Carla Ferrier, Indian Valley Kennels)

GENERAL APPEARANCE – The Native American Village Dog, or Village Dog as it is also known (names will be interchangeable throughout standards), is a breed that has been bred to offer a representation of the old reservation dogs of the Hare and Plains Indians before the introduction of horses. They're a powerful and substantially built dog with a moderately deep, to deep chest and a strong, well-muscled body. The sizes will vary dependent on the type being represented, whether of the Hare (smaller), the Common (smaller) or the Plains dog (larger). The Plains dogs had a wolf-like appearance. Their use was to guard the villages, protect the villagers from predators when they were out harvesting their crops or collecting nuts and berries, alert the villagers of advancing enemies or strangers, babysit the young and/or elderly, help track and hold-at-bay the Indian hunters' game when they were hunting. They also carried loads from 30 to 50 lbs. and along with helping transport game, they also helped the tribe move camps by carrying the homes and supplies of the Indian family, carrying packs or dragging a travois behind them. These dogs had to be able to do multiple tasks. They needed to be good at hunting, guarding and pulling.

The Village Dog should stand well over the pads and should emulate a proud, majestic type of carriage. The head should be set well on the neck and shoulders with eyes that are alert and show interest and curiosity in the world around them. The neck is of moderate length. The head is triangular and is wider between the ears and narrows as it reaches the nose. There is a mild stop. The nose is not stubby, but is slender and can be long but should be balanced based on the size of the head. The eyes are almond shaped and moderately spaced and set obliquely. Acceptable eye colors are commonly light or dark amber, light to dark brown, bi-eyed and on rare occasions can be yellow, gold, gray or hazel.

The body and tail is well furred and can be thick with guard hairs sufficient in length to protect the woolly undercoat. The body is slightly elongated (rectangular in proportion), powerful and well-muscled. They should have medium to heavy bone with sound legs, good feet, moderately deep, to deep chests and powerful shoulders and have all of the other physical attributes necessary for the performance of his job. His characteristic gait is smooth and seemingly effortless. The gait must be steady, balanced and totally efficient. The Village Dogs needed to have speed to keep up with large game but also needed endurance to pull loaded travois for long periods of time. Their temperament can be aloof or timid with strangers, which should not be faulted. These dogs were used to help protect the village people whether child or adult. The Hare type dogs were more friendly and outgoing. The Plains and Common Indian dogs were friendly but typically required trust to be earned. They were too smart to accept a kind word or jester as an open door to friendship. They were not to be aggressive but needed to be ready to take action to protect the village and the villagers should the need arise, without fear or timidity.

The Village Dogs are descendants of the wolf (in explanation, this is because of the German Shepherd, Alaskan Malamute and Siberian Husky bloodlines which have closer descendants to the wolf than other breeds). Selective breeding has maintained the look and intelligence of the wolf without the wildness and unpredictability of them. They are domestic dogs by evaluation but can have the look and attributes of the wolf.

CHARACTERISTICS – In judging Village Dogs, their function as a utility and working dog should be taken into consideration above all else. They are bred as companion dogs as well as working dogs.

TEMPERMENT – The Village Dog should have a gentle temperament and be alert and tractable. He must be able to show courage but not be combative, be instinctive and have the ability to alert, work, hunt, and sled and in some cases herd. Each temperament is dependent on the characteristics of each individual dog. There can be displays of possessiveness as in the guard dog and many will be suspicious of strangers. Some timidity is acceptable as these dogs can require trust to be earned. He should not be aggressive with other dogs (exception: intact males and females may show aggression towards intact same sex dogs). Some measure of reserve and dignity may be expected in the mature dog. It is not uncommon for them to use "warning" body language to try to ward off intruders, such as stomping of the front feet or drawing back and lunging forward. They are playful upon invitation (with those they know) and are a loyal and devoted companion. They are friendly, affectionate and loving (towards those they know) and enjoy being cuddled. There have been instances when these dogs have used their natural instinctive abilities and have been known to use reasoning skills to help protect their human pack from danger (i.e. – climbing stairs to a loft and placing themselves between their owner and the edge in order to keep their master from falling off the edge; there have been instances where they have placed themselves between children playing in a yard and a would-be abductor; they have been known to grab a toddler by the diaper or shirt and drag them into the house to stop them from running into the street).

HEAD AND SKULL – The head is wedge shaped and narrows down to the nose and should be in proportion to the body. The head is moderately broad and is slightly rounded between the ears then tapers gradually from the widest

part of the eyes down to the nose. Spotted or striped noses (i.e., a snow nose) should not be faulted. A solid black nose is preferred. A red or crème colored dog should have a brown nose and leather around the eyelids and mouth.

EYES – The eyes are almond shaped and are set slightly oblique and are small to medium in size. They should not be protruding or overly round. Acceptable eye colors are: light or dark amber, light to dark brown, bi-eyed and on rare occasions can be yellow, gold, grey or hazel. The eyelids can be dark and can have the appearance of eyeliner.

EARS – The Village Dog has erect ears that are triangular in shape and can be slightly pointed but typically are rounded at the tips. Ears carried laid back during gaiting or when at rest are not faulty. They are set moderately apart on the outside back edges of the skull. Dogs with floppy ears can be shown and should not be faulted. They should be judged based on their ability to do the job they were bred to do. Erect ears are preferred.

MOUTH – The upper and lower jaws are broad with large teeth. It is preferred that the dogs' teeth meet in a scissor or level bite. Over or undershot bites are disqualifying faults. Large gaps between the teeth are not preferred but are not disqualifying faults. The lips are tight in front but can have looseness on the sides but should never hang open. These dogs do not drool.

NECK – The neck is to be strong and of moderate length. The neck should be in proportion to the body structure.

FOREQUARTERS – The shoulders are moderately sloping. Forelegs are moderately spaced, parallel with elbows close to the body. Straight legs are preferred but front feet that have mild toeing out should not be faulted. Pasterns are short and strong, but flexible, with a slight slope when viewed from the side. Bone should be medium to heavy. The length of the leg from the elbow to the ground is slightly more than the distance from the elbow to the top of the withers.

BODY – The chest is well developed, moderately deep to deep, not too broad, with the deepest point being just behind and level with the elbows. The top-line should be straight. The body is rectangular in proportion. The loin is strong and well-muscled. The croup is short with a slight slope away from the spine at an angle but never so steeply as to restrict the rearward thrust of the hind legs. The Plains-type dog will have a longer body and back with legs proportionate to support and balance the frame.

HINDQUARTERS – The rear legs are broad and muscled through the thighs and are moderately spaced. Straight legs are preferred but mild cow hocking should not be faulted. The stifles and hocks can be straight or moderately bent. The hindquarters should have good balance and the hip and thigh should have adequate width to accommodate the body.

FEET – On the shorter coated dogs the feet are webbed and more round with well-cushioned pads that are thick and tough with a protective growth of hair between the toes. The feet on the woolly coats are of the snowshoe type, with well-cushioned, thick and tough pads; webbed and well arched with a protective growth of hair between the toes.

TAIL – The tail will reach at least to the hock, however, not below the middle of the rear pastern. On tails that are $\frac{3}{4}$ white, a pre-caudal scent gland should be visibly noticeable $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way down from the top of the tail and contain a combination of hair colors ranging from black, gray, silver white or auburn or any combination thereof. Those with darker tails will still have the pre-caudal scent gland but it may not be visible and should not be faulted if it cannot be seen. The preferred tail set is carried down when at rest but can be carried higher in excitement and during movement. It can be carried horizontally or above the horizontal with the tail having a slight curl. The tail should never be curled tightly (i.e. – like the Akita's), a soft curl is acceptable. It should be well furred based on the coat variety. On the short haired dogs the hair on the underside of the tail will be slightly longer than the rest of the body. The hair on the tail should be sufficient to balance the look of the dog and not be too sparse as to look boney.

GAIT/MOVEMENT – The gait of the Village Dog should be steady, powerful, balanced, smooth and seemingly effortless, never clumsy or heavy. When in the show ring he should be gaited on a loose lead at a moderately fast trot, exhibiting good reach in the forequarters and good drive in the hindquarters. When viewed from the front or from the rear, the legs move true in line, not too close nor too wide. At a fast trot, the feet will converge toward the centerline of the body. For those with a slight toeing out in front and mild cow hocking in the hindquarters when viewed from the front or from the rear, the legs will move toward the outside but will then converge toward the centerline.

COAT - There are three coat lengths in the Village dogs. Short, Plush and Woolly. The woolly coats will be thick and can be long to very long (like a Collie's coat). The Village Dogs should be double coated with guard hairs, which can be coarse. Softness is not to be faulted. The coat should have no doggie odor to it.

In the dogs with short hair, the topcoat should be dense, straight and close lying. It should be short on the head, inside the ears (some furring is acceptable, especially in the colder months), on the front of the legs and on the feet and toes. The hair is a little longer and heavier coated around the neck and breeches. The hair may be longer on the back of the legs to the pastern or hock. The back of the thighs should form moderate breeching.

In the medium to long woollies, there should be a definite mane that frames the face (especially in winter). It should be short on the head, and the ears should be well furred. The hair on the front of the legs should be shorter with longer more woolly hair along the back of both the front and rear legs. There can be a part down the middle of the back. The back of the thighs should have a good amount of breeching. The summer coat will not be as full and the dog should not be faulted.

The Village Dog is shown naturally. Trimming the fur between the toes and around the feet to present a neater appearance is permissible. Trimming the fur on any other part of the dog should be penalized. It should be noted that the absence of undercoat during the shedding season or for those dogs residing in warmer climates is normal and should not be penalized.

COLOUR – All colors from black to pure white are allowed. Common colors are light, medium and dark tortoise shell (sables), black sables, black and tans, blacks, blacks with white, black and gray coloring on a white-based coat, white with black tipped hairs along the back and sides, pinto markings (parti-colored) or any combination thereof. There are no restrictions on color or pattern but it should complement the look of the dog. A variety of markings on the head are common, including many striking patterns not found in other breeds. Blue and brindled are the rarest colors as is red. Each of them are recessive colors that are not commonly seen among the breed.

SIZE – Some variation in size is allowed, assuming working ability, movement and all around balance are not affected or hindered. Height and weight are listed as averages only.

Average height at the withers:

For dogs: 25 – 28 in
For bitches: 22 – 25 in

Weight is to be in proportion to height. Overweight dogs are to be penalized. Pregnant dogs are not to be shown.

Average weight:

For dogs: 65 to 95 lbs.
For bitches: 50 to 75 lbs.

FAULTS – The degree to which a dog is penalized should depend upon the extent to which the dog deviates from the description of the ideal Village Dog and to the extent to which the particular fault would actually affect the working ability of the dog.

- 1 A tail set that is set to high and/or tightly curled.
- 2 Any gait that is not balanced, strong and steady.
- 3 Ears that are set down to low on the side of the head.
- 4 A crooked bite.
- 5 Lightness of bone.

SERIOUS FAULTS – Any characteristic that interferes with his strength and endurance – i.e. - legs that are not in proportion with the body, i.e. – to light of bone with a stockier body, too much bone with a thinner, lighter, more athletic body, a twisting or pivoting of the hind legs when they meet the ground when in motion, elbows that turn out, a back that is not level and has too much of a slant from shoulder to croup, barrel that is not large enough to compensate for oxygen uptake when working, hunting and pulling.

DISQUALIFICATIONS –

1. Dwarfism or any characteristics of such.
2. Weak Character, savageness or excessive nervousness. (Some shyness/timidity is to be expected)
3. Monorchids and cryptorchids, uneven or atrophied (stunted) testicles.
4. Deformities or any disfiguring defects.
5. A swayed or weak back.
6. A bite that is over or under-shot, a dog that refuses handling.
7. One erect ear, one floppy ear.

NOTE: Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.